

North America is linked by the flow of goods and people that cross our shared borders and strengthen our prosperity. North American competitiveness and resiliency depends upon our ability to facilitate these cross-border linkages with policies that are innovative and collaborative. The following recommendations are critical to this vision:

1. **Increase labor mobility.** The list of Trade NAFTA professions has been updated with only two professions since the signing of NAFTA. Additionally, the adjudication of TN status for Canadians needs to be modified so that there is a transparent and predictable timeline for applicants. The process is currently subjective, with instances of the same visa application being accepted at one port of entry and denied at another.
2. **Change regulations that are causing avoidable inefficiencies** (examples include grain exports, cattle inspections, cabotage laws). Security and public health should be the priority.
3. **Streamline trusted trader and trusted traveler programs.** Freight operators express frustration about the complexity of enrolling and maintaining compliance with FAST, CSA, C-TPAT, and PIP. There is similar confusion about trusted traveler programs such as Global Entry, NEXUS, etc.
4. **Enable port-specific solutions and the incorporation of pilot projects into broader government strategies.** Managing the border should not be a one-size-fits-all endeavor. The effectiveness of programs such as FAST and NEXUS vary greatly between ports, demonstrating the need for dynamic policy solutions.
5. **Recognize that effective border management should be a partnership between regional and national organizations/institutions.** The subnational scale, and border communities themselves, are essential to innovation and consistency and should be at the forefront of informing and implementing policies, in partnership with federal entities and private sector stakeholders. The strongest interest in problem-solving lies with those most affected by the problem, yet often the power and ability to initiate change requires the highest levels of government.
6. **Communicate with academics and border researchers, who are a source for evidence-based research and are a vital piece to a North American vision.** Collaboration between policy officials and border researchers should be ongoing and serve as a bridge from one administration to the next.

The knowledge, research, and data exist to guide policy that enhances North American competitiveness and resiliency, yet there is no formal platform for the integration of these resources. My measurement of success is the creation of a formal and coordinated network of researchers and practitioners who collaborate on policy-relevant research. Specifically, we need a regularized system of vertically integrated institutional linkages to share best practices, standardize performance-based metrics, and promote collaboration across diverse geographies and between the public and private sector. The efficient movement of goods, services, and travelers is threatened by political uncertainty, funding challenges, and bureaucratic inertia. Unfortunately, it is difficult to determine what investments and programs have been most successful in the absence of systematic metrics to assess them. Border researchers and institutions can serve as key resources for government to understand and evaluate the border in a way that is unaffected by the turnover of administrations. These key resources should be at the forefront of political discussions regarding North American competitiveness.